

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today as a current satellite TV subscriber who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV .. The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me, including more choices in channels, programming, broadband and new television technologies.

By merging, the combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable television and can offer more programming choices and, most importantly, all local TV channels in every market in the U.S. By providing local TV channels everywhere, this merger will make satellite television a strong alternative to cable in our community. Throughout the country, people will now be able to turn to satellite TV to access their local news, weather and community information, in addition to a comprehensive package of national video programming. But just as exciting, the merger will bring the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service by satellite to over 40 million Americans who don't have high-speed Internet access. These tremendous benefits to consumers won't happen without the merger. Satellite-delivered Internet service will bring an affordable and competitive alternative to cable modems and DSL to consumers in big cities, small towns and rural areas alike. This will give me a competitive choice for Internet access and will be especially advantageous to rural communities where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available anytime in the near future.

Take for instance where we live (Fort White, FL) we are prone to hurricanes and a lot of people here live in mobile homes and we cannot get local weather information. My husband worked in Miami after hurricane Andrew and that is one of our worst fears is not having local weather reports to try and protect our family as much as possible. I also believe that if satellite customers should not have to pay extra for 'local' television (that is at the very least 150 miles from their home, and you may not get all of them) instead you should have the cable customers pay extra for their local stations in their neighborhoods.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I urge you to lend your support to this merger.

Sincerely,

Bethany Pierce
532 SW Utah St
Fort White, FL 32038